

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ANKARA 01825 110807Z
ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 990
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 1825

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, CY, TU
SUBJECT: TURKISH PLANS FOR VAROSHA

REF: NICOSIA 632 (DTG 070944Z MAR 78)

1. REFTEL ASKS FOR OUR COMMENTS ON WHETHER GENERAL SANCAR'S RECENT STATEMENT ABOUT VAROSHA (QUOTED IN REFTEL) CAN BE TAKEN AS A SERIOUS INDICATION OF TURKISH NEGOTIATING INTENT.

2. GENERAL SANCAR RESTATED A POSITION THAT, WE BELIEVE, THE TURKISH GENERAL STAFF HAS PROPOUNDED UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP. HIS EMPHASIZING IT IN A VAGUE, WINDY PRE-RETIREMENT INTERVIEW DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN THAT THE POSITION WILL CONTINUE TO ENJOY TGS SUPPORT; CONCEIVABLY, HE COULD HAVE BEEN MAKING A LAST EFFORT ON BEHALF OF A LOSING CAUSE. ALTHOUGH THE POINT COULD BE EXAGGERATED, IT SHOULD BE BORNE IN MIND THAT SANCAR GENERALLY BEEN CONSIDERED A "DEMIREL MAN" AND HAS NOT HAD A PARTICULARLY CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH ECEVIT. HIS SUCCESSOR HAS MADE NO PUBLIC COMMENTS SO FAR. MEANWHILE, WHATEVER THE MILITARY'S
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PAGE 02 ANKARA 01825 110807Z

POSITION, WE UNDERSTAND THAT VAROSHA REMAINS EMPTY FOR THE MOST PART.

3. IN ANY EVENT, WHILE WE DO NOT BELIEVE ECEVIT WILL TOTALLY IGNORE WHATEVER VIEWS THE TGS PUTS FORWARD, IT IS ABUNDANTLY CLEAR THAT FINAL DECISIONS WILL BE HIS, AND WILL BE MADE ON POLITICAL GROUNDS. ECEVIT IS CONFIDENT OF HIS POSITION

WITH THE TURKISH MILITARY AND WITH THE BUREAUCRACY
GENERALLY, AND WILL BE LESS IMPELLED THAN DEMIREL TO
REACH A CONSENSUS WITHIN THE GOT ON A MAJOR ISSUE.
FURTHERMORE, IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT ECEVIT HAS NOT REPEATED
HIS WORDS OF LAST AUGUST--DESPITE AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO--
ABOUT VAROSHA.

4. THE TURKISH SIDE PROBABLY WILL BARGAIN HARD OVER VAROSHA,
AN AREA WHICH APPARENTLY HAS BOTH MILITARY AND ECONOMIC VALUE
IN THEIR VIEW. AS WE HAVE POINTED OUT BEFORE, A SHOW OF
RELUCTANCE TO GIVE UP ALL OF VAROSHA MIGHT INCREASE THE
VALUE OF WHATEVER CONCESSIONS THEY FINALLY MAKE THERE IN THE
OVERALL BARGAIN. BUT WE HAVE SO FAR SEEN NO FIRM BASIS
FOR PREDICTING WHAT PROPOSALS THEY WILL PRESENT OR
WHAT TACTICS THEY WILL FOLLOW IF NEGOTIATIONS BEGIN.
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